

NSC BRIEFING

17 March 1959

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CUBA

- I. Fidel Castro's campaign against dictatorships has assumed two distinct forms: encouragement of revolutionary plotting against "dictators" and pressure for the exclusion of "dictatorships" from membership in the Organization of American States (OAS).
- A. Castro has denied any intention to intervene militarily but has publicly declared his intention to assist anti-dictator revolutionary groups. Cuba has become a meeting ground for revolutionary groups desirous of receiving Cuban arms, equipment or financial support.
- B. Argentine leftist Ernesto "Che" Guevara has been given authority by Fidel Castro to deal with revolutionary groups. Some low level members of the "26th of July" movement are probably aiding exile groups.
1. "Che" Guevara has demonstrated pro-Communist sympathies and has tended to facilitate Communist activities in Cuba.
- C. Castro's campaign against dictatorships is at variance with other liberal leaders in the area, principally Venezuelan President Betancourt and former Costa Rican President Figueres. They fear that Castro's dealings with Communist-influenced exile groups would introduce pro-Communist regimes.
1. Figueres may assist rival non-Communist rebel groups and Betancourt.
- II. Revolutionary plotting in Cuba is directed primarily against governments of Dominican Republic, Haiti, Nicaragua and Paraguay. *13*

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A. Castro has demonstrated most interest in the downfall of Dominican dictator Trujillo.

1. Anti-Trujillo groups have also become active in several countries other than Cuba, notably in Venezuela, but so far have failed to achieve unity.
2. Castro's apparent vehicle is the Communist-influenced Union Patriotica Dominicana (UPD-Dominican Patriotic Union).
3. Anti-Trujillo preparations in Cuba are not believed to have progressed much beyond the planning stage, although there are reports that revolutionaries are being recruited for training.
4. Propaganda, including radio broadcasts, is being directed against the Dominican Republic.

B. Castro's interest in Haiti, where the Duvalier government is seriously weakened by internal deterioration as well as by external threats by exile groups, is primarily as a potential base for attack against the Dominican Republic.

1. Haitian exiles in Cuba, led by mulatto political leader Louis Dejoie, have been permitted to broadcast inflammatory propaganda attacks against the Duvalier regime.
2. There is no firm evidence that Haitian exiles are training in Cuba for an invasionary expedition despite claims that Cuba is supplying both men and arms.
  - a. However, many men are available for recruitment, including former Cuban revolutionaries, Haitian sugar workers

in Cuba, and mercenaries of other nationalities.

*3. Dominican Foreign Min has warned: an attack on Haiti an attack on D.R.*

C. Plotting against Nicaragua and Paraguay is hindered by lack of unity among opposition groups involved.

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1. Both countries are probably of less immediate interest to Cuba than the Dominican Republic and Haiti, although Castro is believed to support the Communist-influenced Union Patriotica de Nicaragua (UPN-Nicaraguan Patriotic Union) against Nicaraguan President Somoza. Nicaragua is more susceptible to invasions, however, than the Dominican Republic.

III. Efforts to exclude "dictatorships" from membership in the OAS will probably be limited by the reluctance of many Latin American countries to intervene in the internal affairs of member nations.

A. Venezuelan President Betancourt first proposed their exclusion.

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